A VINDICATION OF THE DEGREE OF GENTRY:

In oppoſition to Titular Honours, and the humour of Riches, be ng the meaſure of Honours.

Done by a *Perſon of Quality.*

Ubi omnes omnia pecuniis metiuntur, ibi vix unquam poſſe fieri, ut cum Repub. aut juſtè agatur aut proſpere, niſi vel ibi ſentias agi juſtè, ubi optima quaque perveniunt ad peſſimos, vel ibi feliciter, ubi omnia dividuntur in panciſſimos, nec illos habitos undecunque commode, cæteris vero plane miſeris: Sir Tho. More. Utop. *lib.* 1.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

THere is nothing more unreaſonable and unjuſt, then to propoſe an Utopian Fancy and an Idea of mans own brain, where things are carried on ſmoothly, and the whole Scene tranſacted without any con-

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tradiction from foreign humors, in opposition to the real practice of the World, Law-givers being to duel with several interests and humours of people who challenge a Prærogative in making of Lawes by their observance of them, and force Law-makers to do as well as they can, their perverseneß not permitting them to do as well as they would, as that Plastick power of the Soul which frames our bodies into this exactneß of shape (when, thwarted by the stubborneſſe of matter) brings forth deformed and crooked birthes, yet so confidently conceited is the world grown

of

of their own apprehenſions that nothing will awaken them into a due ſenſe of juſtice and modeſty, each one applauding himſelf in his own fancy, Like the Catt that lickt the file and pleas'd herſelf with the ſweetneſs of her own blood: The remote ſounds of juſtice and other mens reaſonings being defin'd by the nearer barkings of their own, that it would make one as hard to ſpeak any thing which in the leaſt deviates from that rule publick authority hath preſcrib'd in any thing leaſt one ſhould incurr the danger of being hearded with them in the repute of being conceitedly opiniated.

nated. But the truth is, it was no ſuch doteing Love on my own thoughts which gave being to this Pamphlet, but a deſire to ſhew to that Fanatick Party (who will not pay a civil Reſpect to any) how juſtifiable in Reaſon and Religion the ſeveral Diſtinctions amongſt men are, and to free in honour the degree of Gentry from that Eclipſe it ſuffers under a cloud of greater Titles; there being nothing more of Nonſenſe then for Elder Brothers hereditarily to wear naked Titles of Honour, which Younger Brothers have not; Gentry being formed in Nature and Nobleneſſe, and excel-

excellency of Temper being observed in Families amongst Men, as well as amongst the several breeds of Beasts:

From strenuous Sires bold
Sonnes proceed,

Brave Horses from a Generous breed:

Nor doth that awfull Bird
of *Iove*

Beget a weak and fearfull
Dove.

This

This Nobleneſſe of Temper running equally to all the Children, and is that which diſtinguiſheth Families (Antiquity of race being a thing merely in fancy, Time giving nothing of right to any thing) And therefore in all Reaſon all Brothers ought to be in Honour Equal: but the conſideration that men are not fatally what they are, as Beaſts are, but have a Liberty of Will, and a capacity of being improved by Education, hath made me neglect to make uſe of this Foundation (though real, and made uſe of by Saint Paul, *when*

when first to exalt himself, he boasting that he was a reward of the seed of Abraham *) in the ensuing Discourse. But the chiefest inducement was, to shew the Excellency of Monarchical Government above that of Common-wealth, where Propriety and the greatest Interest is the rule of Honour, it naturally verging towards Heathenisme, promoteing Covetousnesse in the World, which Religion tells us, is the root of all Evill, there being nothing of sense to be alledg'd in the behalf of Riches, more then that Mens Interests*

tereſts makes them act to their utmoſt prudence, and therefore fit that Law-makers ſhould be competently concern'd in their own Intereſt, leaſt they play the Wanton? with Lawes, as School Divines have done in Divinity; when as the grounds that Ferne in his glory of Generoſity and other Heraulds give of the Degree of GENTRY, *is farre more Rational, and does more Naturally fall in with Chriſtian Religion. Virtue, Learning, and the Accompliſhments of Rational Creatures being the Source and*

Ground

to the Reader.

Ground of GENTRY, *Riches being onely an Attendant and neceſſarily conducing to illuſtrate their Virtues.*

A Vindi-

A Vindication of the Degree of Gentry in oppoſition to Titular Honours and the humour of Riches, being the meaſure of Honour.

THe intereſts and prerogatives of Princes, are uſually folded up in miſts, and carried in the Clouds, whereby they become ſuperſtitiously reverenc'd, they exacting the utmoſt abilities of all loyal perſons to their ſupport, not their curioſity too narrowly to pry with Eagles eyes into them, diſtinctneſs of apprehenſion taking off admiration; And truths clearly and diſtinctly

underſtood, have not that prevalent influence upon vulgar Spirits, as when as in ſhadowed Pictures there is ſomething of ignorance left obſcurely to flutter upon their imaginations. That to ſpeak clearly and freely of the prerogatives of Princes may ſeem to give too familiar a view to the World of them, and occaſion an irreverence and diſreſpect. But truth does not love concealment; and it was the ſilly fondneſs of mankind, which made gilded and misled errour more prudentially uſeful in the World, then ſober and naked truth, (Children delighting in the glitterings and ſhinings of Cockle-ſhels, more then in the greater ſplendour of Pearls and Diamonds) that it would be now injurious to the more ingenuous Civiliz'd World, as well as to truth, to attempt to delude them

them with the ſpeciouſneſs of errour, when they are become ſo ſagacious as to diſcern betwixt truth and falſhood, and it is no leſs found then injurious to the excellency of Monarchical Government, (which is eſtabliſh'd upon ſuch firm principles of reaſon, that it dares the light, and ſcorns to ſhelter it ſelf under the wings of errour, and be oblig'd to the good Natur'd charity of any to admit its excellency) to be timorous in ſhewing ſome miſtakes and defects in it, (nothing on Earth being ſo compleatly perfect, which hath not its defects and allayes) the diſcovery of which ſerving but as foyles to ſet more clearly off their beauty, or as exceptions to illuſtrate and confirm a Rule. Therefore I ſhall without any ſcruple ſpeak my thoughts concerning the preroga-

tive of Kings in conferring of Tituler Honours, knowing, that truth does more conduce to Monarchies Intereſt, then falſhood can, it being indiſputably certain, that as it is the Intereſt of Subjects for the Prince to have a large prerogative in ſubſtantial power, (to be furniſhed with a large Revenue, and the Militia in His ſole Command) that he ſhall not be ſubject to be bearded by the humour of every diſcontented Party, ſo it is equally their intereſt to have the prerogative certainly bounded and limited in things which are not ſubſtantially uſeful, but may ſerve to vex men into diſcontents, of which nature I am apt to think the immoderate increaſe of Titular Honours are.

Amongſt the many prerogatives attending on the Crowns and Fa-

milies

milies of Princes, there's none poſſibly can be ſo gratifying and ſatisfactory to an ingenuous nature, as to have a right to be in a large capacity of doing good, this making them approach nearer to the ſupream, being whoſe Vicegerents they are, mercy and goodneſs being His chiefeſt attributes. And ſo tender is our Law of this prerogative, that it is become a maxime, that the King can do no wrong; the Law interpreting all His Acts void, which proves injurious to others, He being ſuppoſed above all the little enmities and piques, that leſſer Powers are apt to be intangled with, that ſuch Acts muſt needs proceed from miſtake, He acting injuriously in them to himſelf, in deviating from His own prerogative of doing good. But not onely the ſingle Acts of the

Prince, but Acts of Parliament, where the whole Legislative Power is concern'd, when thwarting the Law of Reason, Nature, or Religion, have been adjudged void; so that if the conferring of any Titular Honours shall prove of this Nature injurious to others, and contrary to the Law of Nature and Religion, and to Monarchy it self, there can be no doubt but they are void in themselves, and that there can be no such Titles.

The better to shew how far they are consistent with Religion, and consequently are in the Princes prerogative, it will be best to shew what distinctions amongst men Religion allows of; truth not onely illustrating and revealing it self, but is as a Rule whereby the windings and crookedness of errour may be discovered.

Religion

Religion therefore ſeconding the prerogative given and implanted by Nature upon old age, commands a reſpect and honour to be given to them. Youths to riſe up and honour the hoary head, which amongſt the more ſublime and refined Heathens hath been approv'd on. *Juvenal* ſpeaking of the golden age, ſayes——

And capital the crime was then,
If youths would not riſe up to ag'd men.
A boy to any beard, although the lad
More Strawberries more heaps of Acorns had.
Four years precedence was ſo much eſteem'd,
Part of old age the chin's firſt down then ſeem'd.

Religion wiſely conſidering that Experience is the Mother of Wiſdome, moral truths in fine contemplative tempers, beeing but ſeen in Landſcip; experienc'd old age deſervedly challenging a reſpect and honour, as carrying in them the wiſdome of the World: Novices and Pupils being to give credence and belief, not diſpute their dictates; reverence and admiration being the firſt Spurs to Knowledge; which advantage, if Youth was depriv'd on, and allowed the authority of bearded old age, they would reſt confident in their own apprehenſions, and by their early prejudice, the experience of the World would be loſt, and wiſdome and knowledge deſcend again into its ſwadling clouts. But there is an old age as to partilars: He that hath ſpent ſome years

in

in the ſtudy of the Laws, being older as to that, then one whoſe chance and ſcattered experience hath informed him of ſome few things in it: ſo civility of education, which makes the common diſtinction of Gentleman and Peaſant, will continue good in Religion, the advantages of converſe and education in few years equalling and outſtripping the others old age. But this diſtinction of Gentleman and Peaſant is not onely authorized in Scripture, as coming under the notion of old age, but alſo as coming under the rule of decency, it being ornamental to humane ſocieties, and beautiful in it ſelf, there being a pleaſing becomingneſs in behaviour, which hath ſomething of beauty in it, and is ſufficient to plead in excuſe even of deformity, the Gentry of each Nation

Nation acting handſomely, ſutable in their behaviour to the temper of their Countrey, hath at once ſomething of beauty and the pertinency of reaſon coucht in it: the airy *French* acting ſutable to the ſpritelyneſs of their temper: the ſolemn *Spaniard* to his gravity; each Nations deportment being improper and impertinent to the natural temper of the other, that thoſe Travellers that writhe themſelves into foreign poſtures, are as a Novice that is to bear his part in Song, he taken with the pleaſantneſs of anothers ſinging, forgets himſelf, quitting his own part, and ſtraining at the others voice, ſpoils the whole harmony. But further as the gratitude of Heathens did riſe proportionably to the benefits they received, they conſecrating them Heroes who had conſiderably

benefitted

benefitted any particular Countrey; and thoſe whoſe benefits were of a more defuſive Nature, and extended to univerſal mankind, they created Gods. So Chriſtianity to Magiſtrates, and to Miniſters, that have gain'd a tender ſenſe of humane miſery, and have their ſouls tun'd up to that ſmart pitch, that they can as ſenſibly find the pleaſure of doing good, as of the twinges of pain, and do actually become beneficial by their charitable induſtry in their imployments to the World, a double honour is to be allowed; and to any that are particularly beneficial to others, Chriſtianity and the Law of Gratitude allows them a reſpect and honour from them, (they giving it to expreſs their own gratitude, not to pleaſe the others pride) Children being to honour their

Parents,

Parents, Servants their Maſters. Neither does Chriſtianity neglect to allow men all fair encouragements to vertue, giving them the juſt tribute of fame for all vertuous actions: *Mary*'s Spikenard being to be preach'd as far as the Dove-like Goſpel ſpread its Wings; nor omits it to enflame men to handſome and generous actions, by propoſing others vertuous deeds as objects of their emulation: the forward charity of ſome being in Scripture made uſe of as provocatives to others, whereby the badges of Families Coat-armory, which are given as Enſigns and Memorials of their Anceſtors vertues which firſt merited them, and are provocatives to poſterity of a generous imitation of them, becomes juſtifiable in Religion. And ſo moderate with us was prudent

Antiquity

Antiquity in Titles of Honour, that there was none which might not be juſtifiable in Reaſon and Religion, they confining themſelves within the bounds of Gentry, Knighthood, Baron, and Earl; the laſt being a more ſplendid degree of Nobilility, and were Governours generally of Counties. Baron is a known juriſdiction, and Knighthood had its employments allotted to it. The Coroners of Counties to be Knights, or men of ſuch an eſtate that were compellable by Law to take upon them that degree, though it is juſtifiable as a perſonal badge of honour, it being a teſtimonial from the Prince of their Merit and Service they have done their Countrey: But Princes not being omniſcient, it ſufficeth that they poſitively reward thoſe that have done good

Service,

Service, and come to their notice, without giving them a precedency afore others, whoſe Merits and Services they know not: Religion commanding that each in Honour ſhould prefer one afore another, a pert proud humour being not to be pleaſed in any: and it is as ill favour'd for them to ſay, give place, I am a Knight, and a more deſerving Perſon then you, as for the Phariſee to ſay, *Stand off, I am more holy then you*; Knighthood being onely a bare teſtimonial of their merit, they being to ſatisfie themſelves with the reſpect that men voluntarily pay them, as men eminently vertuous or learned, Naturally contract a reſpect to themſelves, which is vaſtly more ſatisfactory to a rational ingenuous Nature, then to pleaſe a Womaniſh pride in having a right to go out of the

the Door firſt, which is not in a Princes Prerogative to give, it being below the Majeſty of a Prince to become an Inſtrument of His Subjects Pride, He beſtowing Honour that others might emulate their Vertue. And it is the Prerogative of old Age implanted by Nature and Religion on them, to have a cuſtomary Reſpect paid them, which the Prince cannot deprive them of, but in reſpect of a concurrent Juriſdiction, eminent Service, Employment, or Education that younger Perſons have; yet for this thing of precedency is Titular Honours ſo much coveted, (the Horſe that carries the Bells ever going firſt) the firſt inſtitution of them being wholly vaniſh'd, and to pleaſe a Womaniſh pride of going out of the Door firſt, of ſitting uppermoſt at Tables, is the

ſole

ſole cauſe of them; inventions which generally ſignifie nothing, and have nothing of conveniency in them, but are onely to pleaſe a Childiſh proud humour, when as our Chronicles tells, that King *Arthur* inſtituted in prudence His Round Table, to avoid Queſtions about precedency. The neglecting of which piece of prudence, and the robbing old Age of its Birth-right by Titular Honours, hath occaſioned great diſorders in the World, as will be evident from theſe enſuing reaſons.

From the excellency of Monarchical Covernment, it following the inſtitution of Nature, gratifying our Fancies, as well as Reaſons, and by a Noble ayrineſs exceeding the groveling dirtines of a Commonwealth, where to gain a Burgomaſters Eſtate is to become honourable,

nourable, as much as the ingenuous ſence of Muſick Poeſy exceeds the groſſeneſs of ſenſuality. But when Monarchies do too much purſue the airyneſs of their own Government, and become even wanton in an unmeaſurable increaſe of Titles, they unwarily run into the contrary extream of a Commonwealth, in making Riches the meaſure of Honour, in proportioning to every degree of Splendour and Eſtate, ſeveral Titles, and thereby deſtroys Gentry the ſubſtantial ground-work of Monarchy, (the ingenuous accompliſhments of rational Creatures, being the great meaſure of Honour in Monarchies and Univerſities, as Riches are in Commonwealths and Corporations) there being no rich Man which is not an Eſquire, and above the degree of Gentleman,

nor no thriving Grasier or Mechanick that hath made his Child happy in making the Proverb good, but if he please may strut it in a Baronship, and become one of the head Gentry of his Country. King *James* in His institution of it calling it a degree of Blood, when as Heralds in their discourses concerning Gentry will not allow Riches a cause sufficient to make a Gentleman; Honour as ill-favouredly becoming gross tempers, as the Asses clambering upon his Masters Shoulders, in imitation of the Hound that faun'd upon him. And though amongst the *Romans* the first distinction was of the wealthiest Citizens, (yet it was there of the eldest, and of men equally educated, all being of a Corporation) which they call'd, *Patricii*, or *Patroni & Plebeii*, or *Clientes*;

Clientes; the firſt being Fathers as it were to the latter, they aſſiſting and helping them in their cauſes that ſought to them, and ſo great was the mutual love and duty betwixt them, that it was Treaſon for either party to inform, or give voices, or ſide with Adverſaries againſt one another; it being rational for them to pay reſpect to their Patrons, when they were ſo eminently beneficial to them: but for men to challenge a reſpect and reverence by reaſon of their Riches, (when they oblige not the World with them by any publick beneficial acts; the World honouring them, like a company of Hounds that ſtare onely at him that hath a Bone in his hand) is vaſtly unreaſonable, and the conſideration of that rate that Rents run at, and the dearth of Charity

that there is, and how little Maſters concern themſelves in the advancement of their Servants, will eaſily inform one how little the World is beholding to rich Men. But to the Titles which are gained by Riches, and to that reſpect which thereupon is paid them, is to be imputed the decay of Charity and Hoſpitality; the ancient free *Engliſh* Houſe-keeping being as much forgot, as Pious and Charitable Uſes are, there being no ancient Gentleman of a moderate Revenue, that can ſit down quietly and ſing a Requiem to his Soul chearfully, enjoying his Eſtate amongſt his Neighbours, but he ſhall have a Niggard Neighbour, eminent for nothing but parcimony and thriving glory, ſtart up his ſuperiour Gentleman clad in a Baronetſhip, Families being in each age

to begin afreſh, and contend for an immoderate wealth, to keep themſelves from ſinking below the meaneſt. And no clearer argument can be given of the truth of this, then the experience of the late unhappy Times, when Monarchy ſuffered an Eclipſe: Riches then being the compleat meaſure of Honour, and Men by any ways contending for Riches, there not being an Act of publick Charity, or a good Houſe kept by any in compariſon of former times; that to diveſt Men of the Honour and Reſpect their Riches gain them, is to let them underſtand the true uſe of them, Religion telling us it is a price of happineſs to give.

But not onely Charity and Hoſpitality is deſtroyed by theſe ſeveral Titles, (Mens ambitions think-

ing nothing ſufficient for themſelves) but they corrupt Marriage, and make Men Infidels alſo, in not ſufficiently providing for their Families; Elder Brothers being the Wens of Nature, they drawing all the juyce and nutriment of Fathers Eſtates to increaſe a protuberant pride, whilſt a jejune and hungry amnity is allotted to younger Brothers, Fathers not conſidering how barbarous they are to them, they having gained by their birth and education as high a ſence of the ſplendour of the World as elder Brothers: And 'tis as rational that that heigth of Spirit which is naturally ſuckt in by cuſtome, ſhould be ſatisfied as the natural neceſſities of Men are, Cuſtome being a ſecond Nature: and experience informs us how few of them thrive in the World, that are thrown upon slovenly

venly employments, and forc'd to deny themſelves of that heighth they were born at; Apprentices emulating the ſplendour of their elder Brothers, and become impatient of moving in ſo low an Orbe, that Fathers, that to pleaſe themſelves in the airy fancy of a name, (which Religion expresly condemns as a piece of folly) do allot ſo poor a pittance to their younger Sons, that by their moderate induſtry in handſome employments, they cannot live as Gentlemen, and Marry equally, do become guilty of their Sons Fornication, which our Church deſervedly calls a deadly Sin: and they are more inexcuſable Infidels, in not providing ſufficiently for them, when it was in their power to do it, without putting themſelves to any trouble and pains for it, Religion thinking a

double portion ſufficient to maintain the ſplendour of juriſdiction: (though that meaſure is not to oblige Parents (mens eyes being not to be evil, becauſe their Fathers are good) if Parents ſufficiently provide for their younger Children according to the heigth they were born at, it matters not how vaſt the diſproportion be) The elderBrothers in the infancy of the Jewiſh Government, having juriſdiction and power of life and death in the Family, the excellency of power and dignity being theirs; but they never having any ſuch power with us, they cannot in ſtrict right portend for any ſuch diſproportion, no more then an eldeſt Daughter can do, where a man hath onely Daughters, her ſeigniority giving her no real advantage in the Eſtate, they being by

by Religion and Law Parteners, and ſhare their Fathers Eſtate equally; ſo that that diſproportion that is now commonly uſed betwixt Brothers, is not at all grounded upon Scripture, but is maintained by the humour and pride of Parents, and the policy of the Law and Government; in which reſpect it is rational the continuance of Families in honour and ſplendour, being in ſome ſort requiſite to maintain Monarchy, and not unreaſonable in reſpect of younger Children, it leaving it in the power of Parents to diſpoſe of what they will to them, and hath no reaſon to ſuppoſe Men unnatural, it being a rule the Law hath preſcrib'd to it ſelf, that things unjuſt ſhall never be preſum'd, and the Law is onely barbarous (if a defect may deſerve that name) in not

not giving power [to a Court of Equity to allot portions to the younger Children out of the inheritance of Parents, in caſes of chance and accident, where Parents die without having made any proviſion for them, the perſonal Eſtates of Gentlemen generally not being conſiderable.

And 'tis alſo imprudent in forſaking the old cuſtome of the World, in allowing that Daughters ſhall have portions, it being equally advantagious to them to have none, as to have any, they being in it all alike, then their beauty and perſonal worth, ſympathies of Nature would commend them in Marriage, when as now the ingenuous ſenſe of beauty, the handſomeneſs of temper and alliance the gentle ſtrokes cauſed by a ſympathy of Nature (without which

which there is ſeldome a firm friendſhip) is chokt and dampt by intereſt and Marriage, which by ſome is deſervedly eſteemed a Sacrament (ſo much hath Chriſtianity improv'd it in its inſtitution from what it was) is become a cuſtomary bargain, any Fellow eminent in Knavery that hath gain'd an Eſtate, ſhall by little odds in proportion prefer his Daughter in Marriage before any Gentleman that hath lived in an excellent good repute in his Countrey: So much hath the dirtineſs of a Commonwealth with us prevailed, which hath occaſioned ſo mighty increaſe of Womens Portions from what they were formerly, and hath made it impoſſible for Gentlemen to keep good Houſes, and leave their younger Sons and Daughters any conſiderable Fortunes, without

out at once deſtroying all Families, when the other way of reducing them to no Portions (except when they are Heirs) onely allowing them competent Revennes out of their Fathers Eſtate, till they Marry, is more equitably conſiſtent with the Deſign of Monarchy in preſervation of Families, and vaſtly more ſutable to Religion and Chriſtianity which never permitted fornication with common Harlots, it being below the ingenuity of humane Nature, which delights in a mutual Love, and hath a ſenſe of Beauty, onely as a Beaſt to lye with any to pleaſe his Luſt; and as it is Death to diſhonour humane Nature by bowing down and lying with a Beaſt, ſo the other of Fornication hath ſo much leſs of Sin in it, by how much more the ingenuity of humane Nature is gratified

tified in the ſenſe of Beauty and other handſomneſſes, above what Beaſts are capable of diſcerning and diſtinguiſhing amongſt their own ſpecieſſes: Religion once permitting Concubines and Polygamy (there being a Mutual love and the ingenuity of humane Nature in a great meaſure gratified above what Beaſts are capable of) till Chriſtianity (the utmoſt accompliſhment of humane Nature) reduced it to a ſingle and mutual friendſhip, it willing that Men ſhould be above the humour of *Ben. Johnſons Bartholomew Cokes*, ſnatcht away and carried out after every new face and Puppy-ſhow. And that the ſober ſence of friendſhip in Marriage, and a natural love begot by Sympathies of Natures and one joynt intereſt, ſhould have a ſtronger influence upon

upon them then the ſenſe of variety, it having more of the nobleneſs of man in it, and is more becoming a rational Creature, then the other of being taken with outward glitterings and firſt appearances, which hath more of Childiſhneſs in it. But Chriſtianity in its inſtitution of ſingle Marriage hath not onely more of nobleneſs in it, but doth conduce more to moderation then variety, and more of equity and juſtice in it, Women having as much reaſon that Men ſhould be Wedded in a particular Love to them as they are to Men. That to continue Portions to Women, and Titles of Honour to Riches, whereby a precedency is gain'd, doth both continue occaſions of Adultery, Men and Women being byaſſed by intereſt in Marriage, and not having that

firm

firm friendſhip and love for each other, do ſeek for a greater happineſs abroad. Marriage without a ſober eſteem and love for each other (bating the diſorder that is cauſed in the World by fornication) being but a more ſolemn and creditable way of it, it vaſtly failing of the Chriſtian inſtitution which wills that men ſhould love their Wives as their own fleſh, and alſo neceſſarily inforces fornications, the little annuities of younger Brothers not permitting them to make a Marriage-Bargain. Our Church in prohibiting fornication, without a probable contrivance how younger Brothers ſhall be in a capacity of Marrying, being but to them in ſome meaſure *Egyptian* Task-Maſters.

But Princes do not onely flag into the dirtineſs of a Common-

wealth

wealth by forſaking the true inſtitution of Titular Honours, in making them the Rule of precedency, and the purchaſe of riches, and not teſtimonials of eminent Service done their Countrey, but they further deviate from the excellency of Monarchical Government, which exceeds Commonwealths, as much as we ſee ſtately Fabricks built by the ſingle contrivance of one head, exceeds in beauty and uniformity the Buildings that are raiſed by the humorous fancy of ſeveral, each piece being handſome in it ſelf, when the whole is ugly, like *Dameta's* Furniture, there being no Relation or Kindred betwixt one another, ſo Monarchy exceeds Commonwealths, in that its diſpatches are by the uniform contrivance of one Head, in which there is more of

expedition

expedition and beauty, then in Commonwealths where equal authority and ſeveral fancies retard buſineſs, Commonwealths being forc'd to act Monarch-wiſe in their greateſt actions, Wars being committed to the management of one ſole General) and their mutual complyances are as in the mixture of ſeveral colours, each loſes it proper beauty, and a different third reſults from both; ſo Monarchs that act upon their own fancies, and are not ſo good Architects as to make uſe of the Line to compare their own Superſtructure with preceding Monarchs Foundations, do make a great many deformities and uglineſſes in the politick Fabrick, they forſaking the ſober Foundation of Antiquity which contended it ſelf with Earl and Baron, have gradu-

ally to ſhew the intereſt men have in their favours, and to pleaſe the pride of Favourites erected ſeveral degrees of Honours, *Edward* the third creating the Degree of Dukes, *Richard* the ſecond Marqueſſes, *Henry* the ſixth Vicounts, theſe being all Titles of Precedency, and have no proper and peculiar imployments and immunities belonging to them, a Baron the loweſt degree of Nobility being a Peer, and as great in the priviledges in Law, as any of them; King *James* created the Title of Baronet, which hath nothing ſo much of pretence, as the other Titles of Nobility have, they being near companions of the Prince, the advantages of it being as conſiderable as juriſdiction, and were originally created upon pretence of juriſdiction and imployments,

when

when as this hath no ſuch pretence, but was an invention of the Prince to furniſh himſelf with money towards the *Iriſh* War, they being to find ſuch a number of Foot towards it, for which they had a bloody hand given them in their Eſcutchion, whenas a Childs rattle had been vaſtly more proper, none of them being perſonally engaged in it. And nothing more unreaſonable then for this Title to be a degree of blood, conſidering the *German* cuſtome, where all the Children inherit the Honour alike, is not on foot in *England*, younger Sons of many of the Nobility wearing no other Title then that of Gentleman, that a Grand-Child to an Earl by a younger Son ſhall be a Gentleman in blood inferiour to a Graſier that hath purchaſed a Baronetſhip, and by cu-

ſtome be compelled to pay a reſpect to him as his ſuperiour Gentleman. And it is not rational in it ſelf, all the Sons of a Baronet being in all reaſon to be Baronets as well as the eldeſt, it being as great a piece of *non*-ſence for the eldeſt to be a Baronet and the youngeſt none, as for a Gentlemans eldeſt Son to be a Gentleman and the reſt not, a mans blood running equally to them all, and thoſe Titles of the Nobility that the eldeſt Sons have, is in reſpect of the juriſdiction and peevage that falls upon them, none being ſo fond as to think that a younger Brother of any of the Nobility is not a Gentleman equal in blood to his elder. But it is not onely ridiculous in that reſpect, but it doth alſo fundamentally deſtroy Gentry, the Foundation of Monarchy,

narchy, Gentleman being the ſub-ſubſtantial Title, and univerſal throughout the World, Nobleman being the proper Title of every Gentleman, he being a Man *Ex Familia nova*, and hath *Jus Imaginum*, in view of which our Coat-Armour comes, the other Titles being but as accompanying juriſdiction, and are confined within the narrow limits of particular Kingdomes, or elſe are teſtimonials of perſonal Service, as Knighthood which dies with the perſon, that nothing more idle can be thought on, then for a particular Prince to erect a new degree of Blood above the Title of Gentleman, which is univerſal in all Nations. A further Title there is, which the humour of the World hath made, called, *Eſq*; Maſter *Selden* ſaying, that originally they

were ſuch that attended upon Knights at their Creation; and the humour of the World catching hold on it, applyed it to any hopeful Gentleman, and now is cuſtomarily uſed to any rich man, and is become in common repute hereditary. When Princes thus forſake the ſober inſtitution of things, and forgetting their own Majeſty, poorly become Servants to their Subjects pride, they confound the order of things, and beget confuſions, diſcontents, and troubles in the World; for it being reaſon which diſtinguiſheth us from Beaſts, ſo it is an excellency of reaſon, an acquired inſight into the liberal acts, and a nobleneſs of temper and generoſity of Spirit that diſtinguiſheth us one from another. a liberty of will being onely that which is purely naturally ours, and

he

he that imploys his utmoſt reaſon in queſt of what is beſt, accompanied with a generous reſolve to purſue it, is the moſt worthy perſon, ſuch a perſon valuing himſelf as he hath made uſe of his liberty: and if he be accompanied with the additions of Honour and Riches, as he thinks himſelf not much ſuperiour to any for them, ſo if he want them he doth not think himſelf much inferiour to any by reaſon of them, and that further diſtinction which Religion and the Divine Spirit begets, is in the improving of this Nobleneſs of temper to a generous undergoing of hardſhips, the province and task of each Chriſtian being a ſelf-denyal, ſo that it cannot be in the prerogatative of a Prince that can not make one hair white or black, to diſtinguiſh men, and

make one a more worthy perſon then another (worth being always in ſuppoſition to accompany Titular Honours) the natural impoſſibility of the thing making it out of his prerogative, and the beſtowing of Honour upon Men upon that ſcore, is an uſurpation upon the natural rights of all Men, all that is in a Princes prerogative being to make a Gentleman, with which there is ſuppoſed always a natural nobleneſs of temper and civil education accompanying, which removes Men from Peaſantry, and Knighthood; or elſe Nobility, on which there is immunities and juriſdiction attending. The reſpect to them being paid to maintain an Order in the World, and that the reverence to their Perſons might beget obedience to their commands, they being ſuppoſed

poſed too wiſe to be fool'd by the reſpect that others pay them, into a ſtrange over-weeniug eſteem of themſelves, equal civility in all private converſe being the intereſt of the World as well as the command of Scripture, Religion rationally commanding that each one ſhould in honour preferre one afore another, none knowing the original talent of another, although he may find himſelf in actual accompliſhments anothers ſuperiour, yet the other may have made a more proportioned improvement, and ſo be a more generous and worthy perſon then he, Mens worth being to be computed according to their different talents; which being concealed, none can know the improvement and worth of another, a relative being not to be known, but by the know-

ledge

ledge of both the terms. Religion in this command furthering the peace of the World, none envying and grudging a friends advancement to Honour and Wealth, who continues his former equal kindness, his friendship sharing then in his Honour with him, it being a supercilious pride, a grave strangeness to Familiars that make Men envyed by them: So when Men, to whom custome allows a reverence and respect to maintain the Order of the World do mis-interpret it, and flatter themselves into a belief of they know not what excellencies, imputing that as due to their proper merit, which is given them in respect of their jurisdiction, or as coming under the notion of old Age, become proud, and domineering and abus'd by their false Opinion,

grow

grow ambitious of being diſtinguiſhed by ſeveral Titles, they provoke Men to envy, and occaſion Wars and Tumults in the World. For as Sir *Francis Bacon* obſerves that there is a vaſter diſproportion, and a more diſcernible difference from no noiſe to the ſound of one Trumpet, then there is from the ſound of one to the ſound of two, ſo there is a vaſter difference from Peaſantry to the civil education of a Gentleman, then there is to the more indiſcernible accompliſhments of greater Titles, it being juriſdiction onely that diſtinguiſheth them from Gentlemen, the accompliſhments of Gentlemen running as high as any of greater Titles, that it is vaſtly unreaſonable to make them pay a reſpect to any that hath greater Titles onely without jurisdiction,

and

and deprive them of the priviledge old Age in equal education challengeth, they being acquainted too familiarly with the ſplendour of the World, to be dazled with a ſplendid appearance as with their Miſtreſſes Beauty, and in that reverential amazement be obliged to think all their actions handſome, they being able to break through thoſe filmes of imagination and intanglements of gorgeous apparel, and ſtand upon equal terms, and ſee their perſonal defects, and have as high an eſteem for themſelves as they can without being Fools allow for them; that to oblige men of equal parts, education, Families, to pay a reſpect to Men that they are no wayes obliged to, doth provoke them to Rebellion, pride of Life being one of the

the many and chiefeſt branches of that exact Diviſion of the Apoſtles concerning all things in this world, they being either to pleaſe the luſt of the Fleſh, the luſt of the Eie, or pride of Life; this laſt being the piquant Sawce which gives a pleaſing relliſh to the other of the luſt of the Eie, *Haman*'s Riches and Honour being nothing ſatisfactory when *Mordecai* did not pay him a reſpect; the Natural needs of men being not ſo great, we neither having the bodies of Elephants to cloath, or the paunches of Whales to fill, that we ſhould be earneſtly covetous after any immoderate abundance, nor is a moderate Decency and Splendor ſo craving of it, but to appear in a Splendor ſufficient to dazle weak eyes, and to contract a Worſhip, the ſplendor

of

of the Moon making the old dim-ſighted world kiſs their hands and bow to it, or freed from that airy-neſs more ſordidly and dirtily to indulge themſelves in the thought of being envyed and honour'd for them, like that Athenian *Horace* ſpeaks of :

He Baſe and Rich contemn'd
the Peoples Cries,
And with the thought of's
Gold thus wip'd his eyes ;
When ſcorn'd by Peoples hiſs, I
hugg my ſelf and think
How much I am envyed for my
hoarded Chink.

This Pride being the great enjoyment of Riches, which occaſioned Philoſophers to with-draw into a Quiet and Solitary Life, they being

ing too noble poorly to allow any man their Superiour by reaſon of them, and too wiſe and honeſt to trouble the world in gaining a Superiority to themſelves, but at an eaſier rate freed themſelves from Debaſement, by with-drawing (as out of a Smoaky Room) into a Solitary Life; in it ſhewing, that ſince the Cuſtome of the world would not allow them to be Rich mens Equals, they ſcorn'd to live their Inferiours; others more impatient and turbulenter ſpirited have troubled the world, and wrought themſelves up, *Cæſar* not enduring a Superiour, profeſſing he would rather be Firſt in a little Village then Second at *Rome*. *Pompey*'s pride (in not allowing him his Equal) making him meditate a Warr; Experience of all

Ages

Ages as well as Religion informing us, that Warrs comes of mens luſts; they luſt, and have they not fight, and deſire to have? The natural trivialneſs of humane Nature being ſuch, that Juſtice is corrupted for a piece of bread, a Fiſh propos'd as a dangerous Competitour with the Nobleneſs of our Saviour in our Love. That 'tis no wonder to ſee Warrs and Tumults the conſequence of a Childiſh and Womaniſh pride, all men being born children, and few ſo generousiy noble as to diveſt themſelves wholly of thoſe Opinions they ſuckt in when children, the induſtry of the wiſeſt States-men and the after-improvements of men in Education generally being made uſe of to make good the Tenents and Humours their Mothers at Suck taught them. The pre-

tence

tence of Religion in Warr being (as an ingenuous Perſon obſerves) but as Mountebanks Bills, which decoys Fools, when as the wiſer world paſſeth over them as Cheats, it being Pride and Contempt from Superiours which generally exaſperates and provokes Men to Arms and Rebellion, (that of *Solomon* being experimentally true, *Caſt away the Scorner, and Contention will ceaſe*) that to give Old Age its Due amongſt Men of equal Education, and to take away honour from Riches, is at once the way to introduce Peace and Plenty in the World, Honour being then an Attendant on Education and Old Age, Prerogatives which no violence can wreſt from them; when as to plant Honour on Riches, (which are accidental and ſubject to be raviſh't from Men) is that

which begets Warrs in the world, men knowing that if by violence or fraud they can get anothers wealth, Houour will be naturally an Attendant; and it will make that Stock of Wealth there is in the world continually on foot and going: when as if men with Eſtates can purchaſe Titles, and let it be a piece of Courteſie for them to be civil to one, and exact a reſpect from others *ex debitâ juſtitiâ*, there is no provocation to a handſome expence of their Eſtates, they then gaining them a reſpect when hoarded. And it would advance and pertinently purſue the excellency of Monarchical Government; Univerſities (where Seniority and Excellency of Parts and Learning are the Meaſure of Honour) being in danger of being deſtroyed by the late Contrivers of a Common-

wealth; that to aduance that way of Honour in the world, is to advance Monarchy the contrary Government, and to make it ſhine in its full perfection, it being the property of Monarchy to produce men Generously Brave, a Nobleneſs of Temper being naturally ſuckt in from a heighth of Education; which, if ſtrein'd up to too proud a pitch, and honour is given to Children that wears Titles, it makes them too dainty and Lady-finger'd for Buſineſs, they naturally enjoying a Reſpect without toyling for it from all that converſe with them; whenas to make them pay a Reſpect to Old Men of equal Degree and Education, is to put them upon their Induſtry and uſe of their Parts, to merit Imployments and gain Honour by them; it being prudentially uſefull in a

Monarchy, that there should be for the Nobility further and greater Honours attending on Places and Imployments, then any Subjects Family should hereditarily enjoy.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

An Answer to an Objection.

Objection is, That Parents are not unjust in their Portions to Younger Brothers, by reason of the Callings and Imployments they bring them up to.

Answer.

MAny of them are not brought up to any; and those that are, seem not to be obliged in conscienc to emulate the Pride of the world, and toyle in a Profession

to arrive at an immoderate Splendour, Covetousness being truly styl'd in Scripture the Sin of Idolatry. *For as it was Idolatry to be fool'd by ones Fancy into a Worship of any thing that appeared in any considerable Splendour, so it was by reason of that Pomp and Splendour that Rich men appeared, in that they contracted a Worship and divine Emperours being lookt at as Gods, and* Your Worship *became an Epithet for a very ordinary Greatness. And it is indisputably certain, that amaz'd Fancy is Superstition in the Faculty: For as we see the self same River running through several Countries and Channels gaines several Names, so our Fancyes amaz'd with the Beauty of Women is called* Love, *with fear of anothers anger and courage-cowardice; or if amaz'd with they know not what*

timerous

timerous apprehenſions of the Deity, or if the ſolemne retiredneſs of a Grove ſtrike upon their Fancyes, and begets a Reverence, and wreſts divine Worſhip from them, they run into the Childiſhneſs of Superſtition, the Predominancy of Fancy above Reaſon being the Worſhip of Fools, and truly and properly ſo call'd Superſtition. That to neceſſitate men to contend for an immoderate Wealth, above what makes for their natural needs, and above a Decency, is at once to force men to be Fools, ſuperſtitious, and ignoble in deſcending below the heighth of their Reaſon and Education, in admiring and earneſtly contending for Splendour, their Reaſon ſeen through and their Birth familiarly acquainted them with. It being rational, that a Government ſhould be ſo modell'd that men may

live

live contentedly of a Little, freed from the contempt of Superiours, (the Old Saying being true even to this day, Nil pejus in ſe habet Paupertas quàm quòd reddit homines eſſe contemptos*) and not forc't in their behaviour ſlaviſhly to pleaſe the demure pride of another, it being as great a piece of Baſeneſs and Slaviſhneſs that the Government throws men upon in forcing them to pay a Reſpect to greater Titles, as if it compell'd them to pimp to their Luſts and Lechery. Men according to Reaſon and Religion paying Honour to others, out of Charity to themſelves that the others worth might be more deeply impreſſed by the Reverence they pay to their Perſons, their Precepts being more eaſily admitted when their Perſons are honoured, too great a Familiarity breeding Contempt. And the*

ſelf

ſelf ſame Charity which makes them pay a Reſpect to others; for their own good Will prompt them to withdraw it, when they perceive it to increaſe others Pride, and makes them hugg themſelves in the proud thought of their Riches, others ſtriving with ſo much earneſtneſs for that Splendour and Riches, they are Maſters of making to pride themſelves in them. Which even conſiderative Heathens have laught at that Humour. Lucretius *gladding himſelf in the calm retreat of Reaſon and Philoſophy contemnes the world:*

How pleaſant in that Temple to reſide,
By Learning rais'd and Wiſedom fortifi'd?
From thence to ſee how wandring Mortals ſtray,

And

And through thick miſts of
Error grope their way,
Contend in wit in vain No-
bility,
Both day and night their In-
duſtry apply
To gather needleſs Wealth
and climb on high.

O wretched minds of men,
depriv'd of Light!
Through what dark Errors
(O how dark a night!)
Force you your weary ſteps,
and cannot ſee
How Nature onely craves a
Body free
From hated pain, a chearful
minde poſſeſt
of ſafe Delights, by care nor
fear oppreſt?

A ſecond Anſwer is, That whil'ſt the Graſs grows the Horſe ſtarves. *Profeſſions not bringing in Gains conſiderably till Old Age, the time of mens Youth being ſpent in an anxious ſollicitouſneſs and dread of Poverty, whenas if Honour was taken away from Riches, the unconcern'd Charity of Men would be ready upon all Occaſions to furniſh ſuch that do not indulge themſelves in Idleneſs (ſuch by Scripture* not being to Eat that will not Work) *with liberal Supplies, they having no other occaſions for their abundant Riches then to give to deſerving Perſons; none then needing to fear to engage in the world, whil'ſt the earth is ſufficient to maintain them all. Whenas now none can in prudence haſtily engage by Marriage in the world, upon confidence of*

their

their Professions, they being like Lotteries, Where *One* hits *Twenty* misses.

A third is, That men of ingenuous Tempers and Education ought to have Professions suitable to their Tempers. *And that hath something in it becoming a Noble and Ingenuous Sense of Things, and not be forc't to Drudge all their Lives for Money: Whereas Professions are only now to gain Money, and hath little of the handsomness of Temper requisite to them.*

A Souldier of Fortune, as it is unlawful for a Christian to profess, so it hath nothing of an handsome Passion in it, when there is no sense of the Cause for which they fight, Warrs being undertaken in default of ordinary Justice;

Souldiers

Souldiers that fight in a good Cauſe being but more noble Executioners and Judges of tryumphant Villanies.

The profeſſion of the Law as now it ſtands, hath little to pleaſe the ingenuous ſenſe of doing good, and juſtly for poſitive Laws in Civil matters after promulgated, become juſt and equitable, by reaſon it is ſuppoſed that the parties direct their intentions to the Law in all their contracts. But when Judges do vainly attempt to meet with all new Emergencies and variety of Caſes by Preſidents, they make the Laws ſo numerous and voluminous, that moſt of it is wholly concealed to the greateſt part that live under it, that when their Contracts and Bargains muſt be adjudged by thoſe abſtracted Rules, they knew not, nor had

an

an eye to, in their Contracts the determinations are unjuſt. Or if determined upon lurking queries (as it oft falls out) and Caſes not determined at the time of the Contract, whereby it became impoſſible for the parties to have an eye to them at the time of the Contract, the determinations are unjuſt. It being a prudent rule the Law hath (though it is not obſerved) Jura adaptantur ad ea quæ frequentius accidunt, *Preſidents and poſitive Laws in all reaſon ought to meet with thoſe emergencies that commonly fall out, the reſt being to be determined by natural equity: and it is rational that the Judges ſhould make no binding Preſident without a Parliament being conſulted with. But not onely in reſpect of the numerouſneſs of the poſitive Laws the determinations are unjuſt, but alſo*

in

in respect of the nicities, introduced in Pleadings and Practice, upon which Causes go off, and many times are finally determined, the Judges, since Edward *the third's time having usurp'd an Authority, and have determined Causes upon their own introduced practices in their Courts.*

And this unhappiness is generally attendant on all Professions, that the earnest thought of Gain and Riches hangs like a Cloud over them, and hinders them freely to enjoy their own thoughts, which must needs continue so, so long as Men by custome are to contend for to arrive at those Pomps and Vanities which they vowed against in their Baptism, scarce any (whilst provoked by the pride of anothers grandeur) being able to pursue Riches with that carelessness our

Saviour commands, he commanding that we ſhould take no thought for this life, what we ſhall eat or drink, nor yet for our bodies, what we ſhould put on, the Gentiles ſeeking after theſe things, Chriſtians being firſt to ſeek the Kingdome of Heaven, and all things elſe ſhall be added unto them. How rational and eaſie this command of our Saviours is, will be eaſily diſcerned by any that conſiders man of himſelf without relation to others. Adam *when alone in the Garden, without being accompanied by any of his own ſpecies, having then no further need then the ſatisfaction of his natural appetites, but when ambition and pride grew up, and planted themſelves amongſt Men, and they began to provoke one another to envy aad vain-glory, Riches became neceſſary to pleaſe their proud*

proud vain-glorious humour, they appearing in a gorgeous pomp, on purpose to contract a reverence and respect from Men. But this way of honour being prohibited by Religion as fit for Fools and Children, the use of Riches in a great measure falls to the ground, Religion having taken care to free the poorest from contempt, that none hath a greater care incumbent on them, then competent to provide for those of their own Families. Neither are they requisite to throw a man into a capacity of serving his Countrey in any publick employments, personal abilities being of greater concern, and of greater usefulness to the publick, then an estate to appear in a splendour, above a decency, any of 20l. *a year being capable of being made a Justice of Peace Stat. of* 18. Hen. 6. *and the places of Sherivalty are almost*

almoſt maintained out of the profits of them however might be, if they would conſider that Halberd-Men are the proper Attendants on Judges, and that Livery-Men are out of faſhion, as attendants on Gentlemen, and that two or three Foot-Men would be far more gentile and faſhionable for a Sheriffe then Livery-Men.

FINIS.